

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4808

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 6151

FOR SECRETARY RUMSFELD, ARMY SECRETARY HOFFMANN,
ACTING AIR FORCE SECRETARY PLUMMER, AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY
ELLSWORTH

EO 11652 GDS
TAGS: MASS, PFOR, YO
SUBJ: STATUS OF GOY MILITARY EQUIPMENT REQUESTS

REF: A) STATE 273424
B) BELGRADE 5971
C) BELGRADE 6138
D) BELGRADE 6139

1. WHILE I AM GRATEFUL FOR ACTING AIR FORCE SECRETARY
PLUMMER'S POSITIVE RESONSE ON SOME YUGOSLAV MILITARY
REQUESTS(REF A), WE SHOULD NOT ELUDE OURSELVES THAT
IT WILL CONVINC YUGOSLAVS THAT WITH THIS OR OTHER
STEPS FORWARD AND BACK WE ARE GIVING PRIORITY TREAT-
MENT ON THEIR MILITARY REQUESTS. I AM DEEPLY CONCERNED
ABOUT NEWS WHICH JUST REACHED US THAT YUGOSLAVS HAVE
BEEN INFORMED OF A 50 PERCENT PRICE INCREASE IN FMS
CASE DA YUGOSLAVIA UDU, BECAUSE AN INCORRECT PRICE
BASED ON 1969 PROCUREMENT COSTS WAS QUOTED TO THEM
IN THE AUGUST LETTER OF OFFER. IF GOY SUSPECTED 8-INCH
AMMUNITION INCREASE WAS POLITICALLY MOTIVATED, HOW
CAN THEY BE EXPECTED TO SWALLOW LAME EXCUSE OFFERED IN
THIS LATEST PRICE SNAFU? HOW CAN INEVITABLE QUESTON
BE AVOIDED THAT PRESIDENT'S COMMITMENT TO PERSONALLY
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AND SYMPATHETICALLY CONSIDER YUGOSLAV MILITARY EQUIP-

MENT REQUESTS IS BEING CONSCIOUSLY SABOTAGED BY
SOMEONE IN DOD.

3. I THINK IT IS TIME TO CALL A HALT TO THE GOOD
NEWS-BAD NEWS ROUTINE AND MAKE SOME DECISIONS MORE
IN KEEPING WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE PRESIDENT'S COMMIT-
MENTS TO THE YUGOSLAVS. I INDICATED LAST WEEK(REF B)
THAT IT IS TIME TO MOVE ON TOW; AN EARLY AND FAVORABLE
DECISION IS, IN LIGHT OF ABOVE, EVEN MORE IMPERATIVE
IF WE ARE TO CONVINCE YUGOSLAVS THAT WE ARE NOT PLAY-
ING POLITICAL GAMES WITH THEIR ARMS REQUESTS. WE SHOULD
ALSO COME BACK WITH A QUICK AND UNEQUIVOCAL YES TO
YUGOSLAV ORDERS OF STURM-RUGER SMALL ARMS AND REQUEST
FOR PERMISSION TO VISIT US SMALL-ARMS FACTORY (REFS
C AND D). WE CAN EARN A LITTLE POLITICAL CAPITAL FROM
THESE THINGS WITHOUT ANY COST TO US IF WE ACT IN TIME.
THE YUGOSLAVS WILL PAY FOR THE VISIT AND THE WEAPONS
WHICH ARE UNCLASSIFIED. BUT THEY WANT BOTH BY
DECEMBER 20, SO WE HAVE TO MOVE NOW ON THEM.
SILBERMAN

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NNN

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